

UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Office of the Executive Director
Interagency Advisory Group
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

Handwritten notes:
✓
P
c
P
H

Minutes of the Committee on
Job Evaluation
January 22, 1976

The meeting was chaired by Paul A. Katz, Chief, Standards Division. Mr. Katz opened the meeting by announcing the day's agenda and introducing the key staff of the Standards Division for the benefit of any new members of the Committee.

The agenda for the meeting included the following:

- assignment of occupations to particular sections within the Standards Division and the occupational study schedule;
- agency participation in standards development, particularly for single agency standards;
- an update on developments concerning the new job evaluation system (FES);
- an update on the proposed Classification Standards Advisory Board;
- a "non-pay comparability" study being made in a sample of Federal and private enterprise establishments;
- OMB's Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) manual project and broad GS occupational coding categories for statistical and manpower analysis purposes;
- development of goals and objectives for the Committee on Job Evaluation.

I. Assignment of Occupations and Occupational Study Schedule

Mr. Katz informed the Committee that there had been some reorganization of occupational assignments of sections in recent months. He provided handouts of a three-page breakdown of occupational assignments among the GS sections of the Division. In addition, he provided copies of CSC Bulletin No. 271-20 listing occupational standards studies planned and in process for FY 1976.

II. Agency Participation in Standards Development

Leon Blumenthal, Chief, Engineering, Science, and Medical Occupations Section, discussed agency participation in standards development.

Points made:

- GS standards production will be urgent in the coming months; therefore, the Commission will need to utilize the extensive job knowledge, wisdom, and standards development skills in the agencies. The new FES methodology will facilitate, as well as require, agency participation in standards development to meet agencies' needs. Participation should accelerate standards production, improve standards, and insure better understanding by agencies of the intent of the standard.
- Agency participation in FES standards development will be of 3 types:
 - (1) Test and evaluation of drafts as distinguished from review and comment. (This will require greater effort and involvement by agencies than in the past.)
 - (2) On those projects in which agencies have a substantial interest, submission of a carefully-chosen, well-written sample of proposed benchmarks to meet their needs. This submission will be in addition to the usual one of approved position descriptions, evaluation reports, etc.
 - (3) Agency development of single agency standards. When an agency has substantially all of the positions in an occupation, it may prepare draft standards to meet its needs, under CSC guidance and control. (The Commission staff will concentrate on writing multi-agency standards.)
- The following general ground rules, based on considerations of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, are applicable to development of draft standards by an agency:
 - (1) Prior to initiation of work on a standards project, the agency staff will meet with the responsible Standards section chief to discuss priorities, plans, staffing, and procedures.
 - (2) The Commission will designate a project leader to advise, coordinate (especially in situations where other agencies have a few positions), evaluate, and as necessary, modify the draft. To the extent feasible, the CSC project leader will work closely with the agency project leader performing, in some cases, joint or parallel factfinding.

- (3) Prior to actual writing of a draft, the agency project leader will submit to the CSC project leader for information, discussion and coordination purposes an outline of the plan for the standard including numbers and kinds of positions to be used as benchmarks, a summary of planned changes in series coverage, grade levels, educational requirements, etc., a target date for submission of the completed draft and supporting documentation. With guidance from the CSC project leader, the agency staff will independently develop a draft using agency resources as appropriate.
- (4) The only draft to be circulated to program and personnel officials in the agency will be the tentative draft which must be circulated by the Commission. Because the quality of the intensive review of a CSC draft would be greatly diminished if it quickly followed review of an agency draft, the Standards Division would feel obliged to assign a low priority to the project, so that several years might elapse between reviews. (If an agency feels compelled to circulate a draft before submission to the Commission they can, of course, issue the standard as an agency guide unapproved by the CSC.)

--These ground rules apply primarily to projects not yet started. Although we don't want a procedural straitjacket on FES, CSC control may be especially important in the early stages of projects which involve critical problems dealing with union or management pressures.

--The practice of labeling a classification standard as a single agency standard is merely a device to eliminate widespread distribution of a standard to agencies who have no interest. In general, when a single agency classification standard has been issued for positions in one agency, any other agency with positions properly classifiable in that series may use the single agency standard. (There are some exceptions to this general rule for single agency qualification standards which modify a government-wide standard for an occupation.)

Q: What thought has been given to labor relations involvement in the process of standards development?

A: Although Mr. Blumenthal said he did not intend to try to cover this issue in his brief presentation, he would expect that CSC would be amenable to various inputs or levels of input from labor.

- Q: What procedure should be used to get approval on agency-prepared standards that are ready now?
- A: Meet with section chief involved.
- Q: When is an occupation a single agency occupation?
- A: There is no sharp line of population demarcation; if an agency feels it has the vast majority of positions in an occupation it may initiate a single agency standard to cover these positions. CSC will cover positions in agencies having small employee populations in the occupation.

III. Update on FES

Since the December 30 meeting, CSC has given a number of briefings as follows, to publicize FES and to help members of the Committee get the kind of support they need:

- IAG Personnel Directors, asking top level support for the work and training time needs for successful implementation of FES;
- CSC Regional Directors, alerting them to the need to communicate FES information to field managers, sustaining the effectiveness of the top-level agency support;
- independent unions and professional organizations keeping them abreast of current implementation plans.

Meetings are also planned with:

- professional staff of the House and Senate PO & Civil Service Committees, to provide them with a technical briefing (3/4/76) on FES;
- Classification and Compensation Society (2/20/76) to offer a technical briefing to the professional organization representing classifiers.

A CSC Bulletin is being sent to agencies, asking for their nomination of candidates to be trained to review the initial set of 8 FES draft standards.

- (1) Special invitations will be sent to members of the Committee in regard to FES training being given March 29-31. This training is separate from the courses described in the CSC Bulletin.

(2) Agency requests for copies of draft classification standards are due January 23.

Q: What provision will there be for training outside the initial instructor training?

A: An instructor training package will be available. For those who take the instructors' training, we will have a "hand-off" training package and a slide-tape presentation.

Q: Will agencies choose their own sample on review of FES draft standards?

A: Agencies will make the determination. We want a representative sample.

Q: What provision has been made for overseas training and for others in remote locations?

A: We will have to give consideration to this. Some agencies have training sites, so perhaps agencies in geographic proximity could pool resources.

Q: What type of coverage is expected on comments? Overall agency? Selective?

A: Though agencies may want to make standards available to those interested, we need to limit review to those who will have received training. There is a variety of ways to cover the assignment; for instance, comments might be assigned to installations by grade level.

IV. Update on Classification Standards Advisory Board

CSC met with representatives of the independent unions and professional organizations on 1/20 to discuss the proposed CSAB model. Professional organizations expressed concern because the proposed CSAB does not provide them with membership, but they appeared reassured by our indication that CSAB will not close off their present input on standards, and will in fact provide them with an additional forum on those standards of direct concern to their members. Since the meeting was intended as an orientation, there was no in-depth discussion of independents' and professionals' reaction to the proposed CSAB model.

A CSAB briefing has been scheduled for agency Personnel Officers or their designates on 1/30 to provide them with CSC views on the proposed Board and to assist them in focusing their written comments on those aspects of CSAB that will be of most concern to them as agency officials.

Written comments are due from unions, professional organizations and agencies by 2/27/76.

Q: What about professional organization representation? Will the Board follow priorities established by agency-union membership and thus have concerns of professional groups fall behind?

A: A recognized objective CSAB will be expected to meet is to balance the interests of all groups. "Miscellaneous Provisions" of the proposed model states that the Advisory Board may consult with and receive views from professional organizations in writing or as part of the regular meetings.

Study of Non-Pay Comparability

The Bureau of Policies and Standards is conducting initial research in four non-pay areas which might have compensation-related impact. These areas are promotion rates, employee qualifications, employee turnover, and organizational design. The long-range objective of this research is to identify and assess any differences in these areas between the private sector and the Federal Government.

The private sector research is almost completed, and we are about to contact a small sample of agencies to obtain comparable Federal information. This study is being conducted by the Bureau of Policies and Standards as one phase of a comprehensive research program covering Federal Government compensation and related policies and practices.

Standard Occupational Classification

The Office of Management and Budget has developed, and is currently circulating for comment, a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Manual. This manual has been developed to provide overall guidance for cross-referencing occupational data collected by the broad range of Federal social, economic, and statistical reporting programs. Its major objective is to establish a job classification framework which will facilitate occupational comparisons, while also permitting some modification to satisfy specific agency program requirements. The SOC, however, is not intended to meet the requirements of an internal personnel management program.

The Bureau of the Census is planning to adopt the SOC structure for collecting and reporting occupational data for the 1980 Census. Other economic and statistical reporting agencies have not yet expressed their plans for adopting SOC.

Widespread acceptance of the SOC could have a considerable impact on Federal personnel management policies and operations in the pay comparability and equal employment opportunity areas (including the measurement of adverse impact of employee selection procedures). If SOC becomes the "standard" for the private sector (similar to the status of OMB's Standard Industrial Classification), it will be possible to comprehensively compare private sector and Federal work forces, and to more specifically define occupational labor markets.

Goals and Objectives for the Committee on Job Evaluation

Mr. Katz, in speaking of goals and objectives, expressed his interest in a highly participative committee. He reiterated his statement from the previous Committee meeting, that he hoped that the meetings would evolve from the present practice of presentation sessions by CSC staff to the Committee, to active participant sessions in which the Committee members would make presentations, establish goals and objectives, and take on a leadership role. He suggested that working subcommittees be organized to study pertinent topics in depth and develop suggested courses of action or positions for the committee to take. He asked that Committee members interested in serving on subcommittees write down their names and subcommittee preferences and turn them in to him. Many volunteered. The subcommittees suggested (though not limited to these) were: training, FES, standards development, training in standards writing, the Advisory Board, and occupational coding and analysis.